


11. (New) The hand stamp of claim 5, wherein the receptacle is initially provided in a transport case having a removable cap facing the impression member.

A substitute specification based upon the specification and claims amended under Rule 46 PCT and including the amendment herein set forth is being submitted herewith. No new matter has been entered into the substitute specification.

Respectfully submitted,


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Hand Stamp

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10 The invention relates to a hand stamp having a handle which is connected, and moveable relative, to a housing for a stamp platen bracket forming a support frame, by way of a shaft so that the stamp platen bracket may be moved by a vertically adjustable stem and against the force of a spring from its idle position into a printing position, the handle being provided with a removable cap permitting access to the adjustable stem and the stamp impression member being arranged on the stamp platen by a receptacle.

15 In a stamp of this kind known from U.S. Patent 5,111,745 the effective length of the stem may be adjusted by a threaded portion of the shaft to adjust the stamp to stamp impression members of different heights. Similar structures are known from German laid-open specification OS 26 15 090 and U.S. Patent 5,377,599. In another variant known from British patent
20 2,226,276, there is provided a relatively complicated mechanism which may be actuated by the handle for adjusting the stamp housing.

25 The essential drawback of these relatively complex known structures resides in the fact that it is difficult to mount stamp platens of different thicknesses since it is necessary to affix adhesively in the stamp platen bracket connected to the stem.

30 The invention aims at avoiding the disadvantages of the known stamps and at providing a structurally simple hand stamp which is safe to operate. Such stamp is also to facilitate utilization of stamp platens of different thicknesses and a simple way of mounting them. The stamp in accordance with the invention is characterized by the handle being connected to the

housing of the stamp platen by means of a flexible folding bellows which preferably is integrally formed with the handle, and by a receptacle for the stamp impression member being releasably connected to the stamp platen by a snap connection.

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The structure in accordance allows a user to mount the stamp impression member as a pre-fabricated pre-inked member the first time he is using the stamp and precisely to set its vertical position without any possibility of soiling his fingers, whereby the different positions or thickness of the impression member are compensated by the flexible folding bellows.

In accordance with a further embodiment of the invention, the receptacle, prior to mounting the impression member on the stamp platen, is stored in a transport case which frictionally fits into the opening of the housing frame. During first use of the stamp the stamp impression member receptacle may be connected to the stamp platen by the snap connection when the platen is moved downwardly, without the user soiling his fingers by touching the impression member.

Furthermore, the snap connection makes it possible, if necessary, subsequently to exchange the stamp impression member for a different stamp impression member, with the aid of a tool.

Preferably, the transport case of the impression member may be closed by a cap so that the impression member may be transported separate from the stamp. This is important for the protection of the impression member in supplemental shipments, replacement shipments or separate shipments. In accordance with a further embodiment of the invention, the interior of the impression member receptacle is divided into sections by separators whereby different stamp configurations are made possible by an exchange of individual parts.

Further characteristics and advantages of the invention will become apparent from the ensuing description of preferred embodiments with reference to the drawings, in which:

5 Fig. 1 is a view in axial section of the stamp as supplied prior to its first use;

 Fig. 2 is a section along line II - ii in Fig. 1;

 Fig. 3 is an axial section of the stamp in operation; and

 Fig. 4 is a section through the stamp platen and shipping case.

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 As shown in Figs. 1 to 3, the stamp is provided with a housing 1 forming a rectangular positioning frame 1'. The housing 1 is adapted to receive a stamp impression member 2 mounted on a platen 3 which is connected to an actuating handle 5 of the stamp by means of a stem 4. A
15 flexible folding bellows 6 is arranged between the handle 5 and the housing 1. Preferably, the flexible bellows 6 is integrally formed with the handle 5 and made by injection molding from plastic.

 A threaded portion 4' of the stem 4 is threadedly received in a threaded
20 portion 5'' of an internal axial sleeve 5' of the handle 5 and may be adjusted from the interior of the handle 5 for adjusting the length of stroke of the stamp. To this end, the handle 5 is provided with a removable cap 5'''. As shown in the drawing, the threaded portion 4' of the stem 4 is surrounded by a helical spring 7 which biases the handle 5 upwardly with respect to the
25 housing 1.

 As may be further seen in Figs. 1 and 2, a tub-like transport case 8 for the impression member 2 seated in a receptacle 9 is frictionally secured by snap elements 8', 1'' in the opening of the housing 1. In this manner, the
30 bottom of the stamp is sealed during transport or storage until it is used for the first time.

The impression member receptacle 9 is mounted on the platen by a snap-fit connector. To this end, the platen 3 is pressed downwardly by the handle 5 and the stem 4 within the housing 1 frictionally positioned on the protective cover 8 until the receptacle 9 snaps into the platen 3 by means of snap-fit elements 3', 9'. The transport case 8 is removed from the housing 1, and the stamp is then in condition for use. Thus, the stamp impression member 2 may be mounted without the user having to touch it.

As shown in Fig. 4, the transport case 8 in which the receptacle 9 is seated is covered by a protective cap 10 for supplying new stamp impression members 2.

The invention makes it possible to use differently shaped pre-inked impression members and to exchange them, if necessary with the aid of a tool, as a result of the snap-fit connection of their receptacles in the platen. In the receptacle 9, the stamp impression members may be divided into several sections, to allow printing different patterns and/or colors. Figs. 1 to 3 show an impression member 2 which is divided into four sections by separators 9".

By removing the handle cap 5" the stamp may be placed upside down so that it may be inked or its impression member changed with the aid of a tool.

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~~Patent Claims:~~

1. Hand stamp provided with a handle (5) connected by a shaft (4") to a
5 stamp platen (3) housing (1) forming a positioning frame (1') for movement
relative thereto for moving the stamp platen by a vertically adjustable stem
against the force of a spring from an idle position to a printing position, the
handle (5) being provided with a removable cap (5") permitting access to the
adjustable stem (4) and the impression member (2) being arranged on the
10 stamp platen (3) by a receptacle (9), characterized by the fact that the handle
(5) is connected to the housing (1) of the stamp platen (3) by a flexible folding
bellows (6) preferably integrally formed with the handle (5) and that the
receptacle (9) for the impression member (2) is releasably connected to the
stamp platen (2) by a snap-fit connection (3', 9').
- 15 2. Hand stamp according to claim 1, characterized by the fact that the
impression member receptacle (9), prior to mounting the impression member
(2) on the stamp platen (3) is stored in a transport case (8) which fits
frictionally into the opening of the positioning frame (1).
- 20 3. Hand stamp according to claim 1, characterized by the fact that the
transport case (8) of the impression member (2) is enclosable by a cap (10) to
allow transport of the impression member separate from the stamp.
- 25 4. Hand stamp according to one of claims 1 to 3, characterized by the
fact that the interior of the impression member receptacle (9) is divided into
sections by separators (9").
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~~Abstract~~

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